

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
Richmond Division

PREPARED FOOD PHOTOS, INC.,)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
 SOUTHERN ROOTS FARM LLC,)
 Defendant.)
 _____)

Civil Action No. 3:23cv456 (RCY)

ORDER

This matter is before the Court on the Letter Motion to Appoint Counsel (ECF No. 7) filed by Beth Norford, owner of Defendant Southern Roots Farm LLC. As Ms. Norford recognizes, artificial entities—a category which includes LLCs—require licensed counsel to represent them in legal proceedings and may not appear *pro se*. See *Rowland v. California Men’s Colony, Unit II Men’s Advisory Council*, 506 U.S. 194, 201–02 (1993); *MR Crescent City, LLC v. TJ Biscayne Holdings LLC*, 515 F. App’x 198, 198 (4th Cir. 2013). Moreover, there is no absolute right to counsel in civil litigation (as opposed to in criminal prosecutions), and while 28 U.S.C. § 1915 provides for the discretionary appointment of counsel for individual civil litigants, there is no corollary provision authorizing the appointment of counsel for artificial entities. See *Rowland*, 506 U.S. at 201–07 (§ 1915 is applicable “only to individuals” or “natural persons,” not “artificial entities”). Accordingly, the Court must DENY the Motion to Appoint Counsel (ECF No. 7).

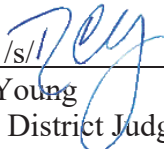
In acknowledgement of Defendant’s situation, however, the Court *sua sponte* ORDERS that Defendant shall have an additional 45 days from the original answer deadline, i.e., until September 29, 2023, to retain counsel to represent Defendant in this action. Defendant is referred to the legal resources for unrepresented parties available on the Court’s website at <https://www.vaed.uscourts.gov/pro-se-litigant-information>, EDVA Pro Se Handbook, p.5, which

may help Defendant identify counsel willing to accommodate Defendant's financial constraints.

Let the Clerk file this Order electronically and notify all counsel of record accordingly. The Clerk is further DIRECTED to mail a copy of this Order to Beth Norford at the return address shown on the Envelope docketed at ECF No. 7-1.

It is so ORDERED.

Richmond, Virginia
Date: August 30, 2023



/s/ Roderick C. Young
United States District Judge